

LITERARY MISCELLANY.

A DAY IN SUMMER.

BY CAROLINE BRIGGS MASON.

Birds are singing through the branches.

On this leafy, summer day;

Thoughts are singing through my spirit,

Radiant and fair as I am,

I am thinking, as I ramble,

Of the olden, olden times,

When I wandered through the meadows,

Weaving happy, childish rhymes.

Just such sunny skies bend o'er me

As are bending o'er me now;

Just such sweet, love-making breezes

Kissed and kissed me, cheek and brow.

How I wandered through the meadows,

Linking happy, childish rhymes;

Weaving fancies and thoughts together,

In the olden, olden times!

Well-a-day! but youth is fleeting!

And I never wander now

Where the sweet, love-making breezes

Kissed and kissed me, cheek and brow;

Yet the same deep spell comes o'er me

With the breath of this fair day,

Like a fresh, serene baptism,

From the meadows far away.

And my heart is glad and happy

With the pure joy of a child—

Glad that the Father lends it

Thoughts so sweet and undelivered.

Gladly yet, that still it trembles

To the music of the rhymes

That I am weaving the sweetest

Of the olden, olden times!

For the National Era.

RECOLLECTIONS OF MY GRANDFATHER'S HOME.

CHAPTER III.

The Visit.

"We know not the future; the past we have left;

It is cherished enjoyment, the bosom can melt."

Twas a happy day for Benny and myself

When, released from the task and confinement

Of the school-room, we found ourselves on the

road to our grandfather's farm. That day

was an era in our young lives—the usher in of

big plans for future usefulness. My grand-

father was in the midst of haying, and need-

ing help; the old market wagon had been dis-

patched for no less important personages than

my brother, venerable by eight years, and my-

self his junior by one.

No reluctant heart then dimmed our eyes,

as we bade the wretched good bye; and we

think our loved mother's customary injunction,

"behave well, my dears," sounded less

sweet than usual. "Dear," exclaimed little

Benny, "I'm no dear! I'm a little man, my

grandfather's man!" Dear, mentally repeated

I, eyeing avarice my pantalettes and check-

ered pinafore!

Twas not the spirit which sends the school-

boy to promenade in a round jacket into

drowsy coat and dicky; or the longing mind

from her mother's nursery, to wither in gas-

lighted ball-rooms! Oh no; it was a self-im-

portance, a first consciousness of our own in-

dividuality, gained with the newly conferred

honor. Do you wish to plant self-reliance in

the bosom of a child, to bind him to yourself

by firm ties, make him, not your servant, but

your useful companion in some pleasant em-

ployment. Let such, such things engage his busy

brain; let him not feel it a favor to be con-

ferred upon, but that he does it because God

him those hands to do the bidding of an un-

selfish heart. Thus, then, will spring up in

the mind of that child a spirit of gentle bene-

volence, which shall make happy and honorable

his after life.

Clumsily rattled the old market wagon

beneath its juvenile burden, and wearily plod-

ded the old gray horse, urged on by the blows from

my grandfather's leather whip. What a scene

for our equippage! No modish harness could

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glowed with joy, not with shame; and each

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fingers tingle with very gladness; for were we

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A true child never cares for fashion. Here

and there an anomalous infant, who has been

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from an uneasy slumber. I was dreaming of that little enclosure in the mowing field. I thought we were gathering buttercups on Olley's grave, when a great pit suddenly opened, and little Benny fell into it! There was a slight-shaking sensation, and a mist around little Benny; but a puff of the morning air, and the push of a little robin under the win-

dow, restored my wonted cheer. How lightly shadows rest on the brow of childhood!

"Quick—we're almost ready," shouted Ben-

ny, at the top of his voice, and then ran away

to help "fix off." No elaborate toilette retard-

ed my exit that morning. Little Benny had

pumped a basin of fresh water, which, with a

sapkin, awaited me, on the wooden bench at

the back door. Near, amidst the appliances

of luxury, I have loved my hands and face in

a china basin with so much zest as I scrubbed

them that morning in the wooden basin at the

back door! When wearied by etiquette, worn

out by the ceremonious nothings of now-a-day

life, how are we fain to look back to the sim-

ple time-saving, pain-saving customs of our

ancestors! We find ourselves, in imagination,

not in a modern social community, with its

modern innovations, but in a circle where gen-

eralization is carried to a much higher point,

and where property becomes personal, in the

household, only by immediate possession. The

days of mugs and ewerless basins have passed

away—and, in good conscience, we must say,

let them not come again!

"Breakfast"—who would stop for that; and,

besides, some mysterious import attached itself

to a huge, brown-paper bundle, under Nathan's

arm—sundry grooves spots in the stout envel-

oped ominous. "I know," Hannah told me;

cheese and gingerbread," said Benny, in an un-

der-tone. The key with the leather handle

was a riddle still, Benny turned it over. "Some-

thing that runs," said he, with a mysterious

look. The olfactory proved the best expo-

sitor, and Benny raised his head, in great glee,

all commended with molasses!

That forenoon's experience was long remem-

bered by one at least. Hat and sunbonnet

were thrown aside; for Benny said he was a

boy, and a brownie would do no hurt—as for

me, guileless then, what cared I whether I were

black or white!

The smallest rakes were laid aside for the

"new hands," as our grandfather jocosely

called us; and the art of "fraking after" soon

ceased to be a mystery to us novices. To be

sure, our little hands were rather red and rather

speckled; but, then, Benny said they would soon

grow tough like Nathan's! (childish simplicity,

that!) and the fun of treading down the sweet

hay, and jolting over the sill of the barn, more

than made up for all our ills.

"Our new hands ain't so green, after all,"

remarked spruce young David to his fellow-

mower. "Tell better after the new's off," was

the bluffy reply! The old clown, whispered

Benny indignantly. How clever David is, I

mentally ejaculated.

Alas! Nathan's experience proved a better

prophet, that day, than David's prepossessions.

The big rock was an unsafe resting place for

our tired little bodies. Benny was sure grand-

father wouldn't care, and his sharp knife

quickly severed the unyielding knot. No gourd-

arm ever smacked his bit of turtle-fat with

more gusto than the new hands gulped down

the cheese and gingerbread. What a scene!

The key proved more inoperative; but Benny

was a practical philosopher, and poised it

nicely on a little stick. It was lubberly I who

turned the scale. Just as the first dulcet drop

reached my longing lips, an unlucky stone

slipped, and down went I, with the round stick

and brown keg!

"A sweet bundle you are—into the house,

you little mule," shouted gruff, thirty Nathan.

Benny, with a dignified "Touch her if you

do," retorted, he brandishing the afore-

said round stick in a most formidable manner.

But there was no gainsaying the import of

grandfather's lowered eyebrows, and we idled

away a gloomy afternoon in the old farm-

house.

That night, when I had left Benny sobbing

in his little bed-room, and found myself in the

dark east chamber, somehow the furnishings

of that room took on fantastic shapes; the

curtains grew black, and weaved to and fro;

the oaken chest of drawers loomed into a gre-

giant, while flitting forms seemed to rustle

round me. I forgot to say my little prayer

that night; and somehow I had, in the morn-

ing, a half-real, half-uncertain recollection of

a frightful dream about a deep hole and little

Benny.

The next day my grandfather seemed kinder

than usual, old Nathan less gruff and clever

than of late. He seemed to have conferred

upon himself, but that he does it because God

him those hands to do the bidding of an un-

selfish heart. Thus, then, will spring up in

the mind of that child a spirit of gentle bene-

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cinnati and vicinity.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1854.

A DISTINCTION WITHOUT A DIFFERENCE.

In the Senate, yesterday, Mr. Douglas an-

nounced a modification of the 14th section of

his Bill, as the result of a consultation among

the friends of the measure. He moved to

amend the Bill by striking out from the 14th

section the words—"which was superseded by

the principles of the legislation of 1850, com-

monly called the Compromise measures, and is

hereby declared inoperative," and to insert,

"which, being inconsistent with the principle

of non-intervention by Congress with Slavery